

From: Kate Smith [mailto:katosmitho@mac.com]

Sent: Thursday, February 09, 2017 8:13 AM

Subject: Raising the minimum wage

I'm reaching out to the legislature about the minimum wage bill (H. 93).

I'd like this to be a public comment at the testimony part of the bill tonight, as I am unable to make it in person.

We, my husband and mother-in-law, run a small business in Stowe, and employ around a dozen people.

We would love to be able to pay our employees a higher hourly rate, but are unable to stretch to that currently.

It is the right thing to do for many reasons (cost of rent and affordability/access to transport to name but two), but we would suffer by raising it above our competitors.

We need to do this together.

Raising the minimum wage would make Vermont a more attractive place to live and raise a family, so that young families can afford the higher cost of living in Vermont.

The legislature also needs to make sure that as people earn more, they don't lose other vital supports like health care or food stamps... the "benefits cliff" needs to be addressed and access to health care needs to be expanded.

(I would love to address this specifically about one of our employees in a confidential setting, if there is anyone I can contact directly, please let me know, thank you.)

Thank you for your time,

Kate Smith